

S. 2520. An act to amend the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to provide for engagements with State, local, Tribal, and territorial governments, and for other purposes.

PRESIDENT BIDEN'S COVID CRISIS

(Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Madam Speaker, I rise today to address President Biden's COVID crisis.

Sadly, COVID-19 cases and hospitalizations in the United States have reached record highs in the past week. Many Americans are having trouble finding COVID at-home tests and difficulties in scheduling a time to be tested with their healthcare provider.

What is President Biden's response?

In a recent COVID Zoom meeting with Governors, President Biden said: "There is no Federal solution."

Now, this mishandling of the pandemic is disappointing. Operation Warp Speed, developed under the previous administration, provided significant vaccines in record time. This initiative also established a robust distribution plan, innovative treatments, medical equipment, and ever-growing testing capacity.

Madam Speaker, in addition to this, our families are struggling to pay for everyday goods as inflation reaches a 40-year high. We are facing a self-inflicted economic crisis as this administration encourages our workforce to stay home. Our students continue to face uncertainty in their learning with last-minute school closures despite schools receiving ample COVID relief funding.

To distract from these failures, President Biden and congressional Democrats are trying to change the rules in the Senate to pass their Socialist agenda.

VOTER SUPPRESSION

(Mr. GALLEG0 asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. GALLEG0. Madam Speaker, on January 6 we witnessed a violent coup attempt in our Capitol fueled by the big lie.

Our country continues to face a slow-moving coup in the form of voter suppression.

I have seen firsthand in my home State of Arizona voter suppression laws targeting people of color and a State senate that would rather waste taxpayer money on a sham audit instead of upholding our sacred democratic right to vote.

The Freedom to Vote: John R. Lewis Act is critical to protecting the vote in my State and States across the country where restrictive laws are being put into place to strip people of their right to vote. Arizona will stand strong together this weekend. Thousands will gather this Saturday in Phoenix for democracy and voting rights.

Passing this bill today answers their call by guaranteeing access to democracy for every Arizonan.

Today the House showed where it stands. We won't shrink from protecting our democracy and the voting rights of all Americans. It is past time for the U.S. Senate and Senator SINEMA to do the same.

HONORING THE LEGACY OF GRANVILLE CRANE

(Mr. PALAZZO asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. PALAZZO. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the memory of the late Granville Crane, surviving crew member of the USS *Indianapolis* and recipient of the Congressional Gold Medal.

Mr. Crane was born in 1925 and turned 95 years old this year. He joined the ship's crew at the age of 16, one of the youngest crew members to join at the height of World War II.

In 1945 he participated in a top-secret trip to deliver parts for the first nuclear weapon ever used in combat and was aboard the same ship when it was torpedoed and sunk that year.

Hundreds of men went down with their ship, and many more faced dehydration, shark attacks, and exposure before there was any hope of rescue. Of 1,195 men aboard, Mr. Crane was one of only 316 who survived. As Mr. Crane waited to be rescued, he clung to his faith.

Mr. Crane will be remembered as a family man, a hero, a survivor, a patriot, and a great man of God.

On behalf of the Fourth Congressional District and our great Nation, we are forever in Mr. Crane's debt. Our prayers are with Mr. Crane's family at this time. May he rest in peace.

MINIMUM WAGE

(Mr. CARTER of Louisiana asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. CARTER of Louisiana. Madam Speaker, 20 States, including Louisiana, still have the same hourly pay floor as the Federal minimum wage: \$7.25.

Louisiana also has the second highest poverty rate of any State. That is because minimum wage is a poverty wage—a full-time salary is less than \$16,000 a year. No one can survive on that, much less raise a family on that wage.

While the Federal minimum wage has not increased since 2009, the costs of housing, medicine, food, and childcare have all exponentially increased. We cannot simply subject millions of our constituents to endure the trials of poverty. It is not a mystery. We can, we must, and we know how to help. It is time to finally increase the Federal minimum wage and lower the costs with the Build Back Better Act.

INFLATION SURGE

(Mr. HILL asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. HILL. Madam Speaker, I rise today to bring attention to the latest Consumer Price Index data released by the Bureau of Labor Statistics just yesterday.

This new data shows a 7 percent annual increase in inflation—the largest 12-month increase since 1982. The last time inflation was this out of control, Michael Jackson had just released "Thriller". So from moonwalking to now sleepwalking with President Biden, we have continuously seen negative real wages, meaning that our pay is actually decreasing when you account for inflation.

The President's only idea is to print and spend more money. Gasoline is up 50 percent. Propane, kerosene, and firewood are up 34 percent; and beef, veal, and bacon are up 18 percent. Higher inflation is eroding the true purchasing power for all American families, and these record-breaking CPI numbers underestimate the real cost of inflation.

Americans need leadership that will prioritize getting our economy and our Nation back to its pre-pandemic performance.

□ 1230

AMERICA'S CHILDREN ARE COUNTING ON US

(Ms. SCANLON asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. SCANLON. Madam Speaker, January 14 marks the first time in 6 months that families will not receive an expanded child tax credit payment, a program to support children and families that Congress passed last spring with the American Rescue Plan.

For the last 6 months, working and low-income families have had the relief of knowing that every month they would receive \$250 per child, and \$300 for kids under six.

These payments have been a lifeline for families, helping them put food on the table and provide for children as the pandemic rages. As a result, child poverty and hunger then dropped in this country by almost half.

More than 76,000 families in my district received these monthly payments, and they are worried about what will happen now that the payments have ended. Just last weekend, two constituents, a dad and a grandmother, approached me to say how important the CTC program had been.

We cannot go backwards. The Senate must move quickly to pass the Build Back Better Act and extend the child tax credit. America's children are counting on us.